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WASHINGTON SPECIAL ACTIONS GROUP

February 16, 1972

Time and Place: 3:15 p.m. - 4:04 p.m. -- White House Situation Room

Subject: Cyprus

Participants:

Chairman: Henry A. Kissinger

CIA: Mr. Thomas Karamessines
Mr. John Walker

State: Mr. John N. Irwin, II
Mr. Joseph Sisco

NSC: Gen. Alexander M. Haig
Mr. Richard Kennedy
Mr. Harold Saunders
Mr. Mark Wandler

DOD Mr. G. Warren Nutter
Mr. James H. Noyes

JCS: Lt. Gen. John W. Vogt

It was agreed that:

-- Mr. Sisco would prepare a cable, giving guidance to our Embassies in Cyprus and Greece.

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Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Karamessines) Let's start with your briefing.

Mr. Karamessines-read the attached intelligence briefing.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Sisco) Joe, what do you think?

Mr. Sisco: I think we should continue to play out the same string we have been playing.

Dr. Kissinger: Does that go for Popper, too? [referring to Nicosia 358, February 16]

Mr. Sisco: Yes. If it's all right with you, though, I will get to this a little later.

Dr. Kissinger: It seems to me that he is planning to do exactly what we told him not to do on Monday.

Mr. Sisco: I would like to discuss this in a little while. In the meantime, let me review what we have done. First, we told the Greeks they were doing something risky. Second, we told them that if they published the note, it would make the diplomatic process of seeking a peaceful solution even more difficult. Third, we have made it clear to Waldheim that we would support a UN effort to gain control of the Czech arms. Our Ambassadors have been told to play this whole situation in a low-key way.

Dr. Kissinger: What can Waldheim do about the arms?

Mr. Sisco: He has two basic ways in which to handle the situation. The first is for the UN to actually take control of the arms. That, of course, would be the action most favored by Greece and Turkey. The second is to follow the pattern which has been used during the last year -- periodic inspection of the arms.

Dr. Kissinger: How has that worked out?

Mr. Sisco: It has been quite effective. I should point out, Henry, that we have not discussed details with Waldheim. We just told him that anything he can do would be good, and he has told the Greeks and Cypriots that he is ready to do whatever is necessary. I think we should temporize because the play is still between the Greeks and the Cypriots at the present time.

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Dr. Kissinger: Joe, can you tell me what you think the Greeks are doing? What do they think they are doing?

Mr. Sisco: Let me try. First, though, I want to say that Tasca has not gone in -- and I think we are playing it right. The Greeks evidently assumed they had the mass support for their actions. But as the crisis continues, the Greeks assume Makarios is taking steps to bring public support to his side. I also think the Greek objectives are more tailored now than they appeared to be when the note was delivered. You can see this, in part, from the latest comments they -- especially Ambassador Panay -- have made.

Dr. Kissinger: The objectives are more tailored to what -- to control of the arms?

Mr. Sisco: Possibly. There might also be some element of bringing about a face-saving situation with regard to the make-up of a new government.

Dr. Kissinger: Why have the Greeks done all of this -- and why has nothing happened?

Mr. Irwin: We don't really know, Henry. We have to figure out now what we do next week when all of you are away. What are your feelings? I think we should still hold off. If the Greeks move, they will probably move fast. But even if Makarios is overthrown, we should not get involved. What if the Greeks bungled a coup attempt? A civil war could follow, and Greek mainland forces might intervene. What would the Turks do then? The UN is seized of the desirability of resuming the talks and of controlling the arms -- but it will not get into the question of bargaining with Gen. Grivas. Considering all of this, is there anything the U.S. can do to encourage a more active UN role, or -- if there are military operations -- should we take any steps vis-a-vis Greece?

Dr. Kissinger: And now the Soviets have entered the picture, too, with their expression of support for Makarios.

Mr. Irwin: That's right. Sadat also said something. We may have reached the point where it is in our interest to ask the UN to take a more active role.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Cypriot National Guard moves, will it be seen as foreign intervention in Cyprus?

Mr. Sisco: Not primarily. I have to hedge a bit here, but I think it would be seen substantially in internal terms. It is well-known that the Guard is commanded by 600 Greek officers who owe their primary loyalty

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to Athens. The line between internal action and international intervention would be the direct involvement of the Greek troops on the island. Under the terms of the London - Zurich accords, as you probably know, Greece and Turkey have certain rights if the status quo is upset.

Dr. Kissinger: Does that include military activity?

Mr. Sisco: Yes. They can quell "civil strife."

Mr. Karamessines: They can take actions to restore the provisions of the agreement if those provisions have been upset.

Dr. Kissinger: Greece and Turkey would have better grounds for intervention, then, if they say they want to solve the arms problem than if they say they want to replace Makarios.

Mr. Sisco: Absolutely.

Mr. Irwin: Under the Treaty of Guarantees, Greece, Turkey and Great Britain can move to restore the constitutional status quo.

Mr. Sisco: That's why the Greeks argue that the arms alter the delicate balance on the island. It gives the Greeks some semblance of legality under the London-Zurich accords.

Mr. Irwin: From the world point of view, a National Guard move would be seen as a Greek move, largely because there are Greek forces stationed with the Guard.

Mr. Sisco: Plus the ultimatum the Greek Government gave Cyprus.

Dr. Kissinger: What would it all mean? What would happen in the UN?

Mr. Sisco: In the UN, it would almost certainly mean a 100+ vote for the territorial integrity of Cyprus.

Dr. Kissinger: Wouldn't the vote depend to some degree on what the National Guard did? If you extinguish a state, that's one thing, but if you install a new government -- one which is broadly based -- that's another thing. What would the Soviets do?

Mr. Sisco: They would surely make loud noises in the Security Council.

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Dr. Kissinger: Why don't they do that now?

Mr. Sisco: I don't think they are doing that now because Makarios is taking this whole situation very seriously -- since Greece and Turkey are together. I have a news item here which says the "Makarios government received expressions of support today from the Soviet Union and Poland." The Soviet Ambassador probably called on Makarios.

Dr. Kissinger: How do you think the situation will develop? How long can the situation continue in the present course?

Mr. Karamessines: The present course can continue for the next several days. Makarios will try to string it out. Each passing day, though, puts the Greeks in a more uncomfortable and embarrassing position.

Mr. Sisco: We surmise that -- there is no evidence for it.

Mr. Irwin: If the present situation drags on, there is no problem for us. But if it drags on -- and if the Greeks make a move -- then the question arises about what we should do. Would it be better to wait and see what happens, or would it be better to do what we can -- probably through the UN -- to try to defuse the issue? If the arms issue can be settled, it may be possible to force Grivas off the island.

Mr. Nutter: What will happen if the Greeks back down?

Mr. Irwin: Then I think it would become a question of what Turkey would do -- because the arms issue would still have to be settled.

Mr. Sisco: That's right. The main thing is to get the arms under UN control. I can't conceive of the Greeks backing down without seeing the arms issue settled.

Mr. Karamessines: Turkey undoubtedly feels the same way.

Mr. Sisco: They do.

Mr. Irwin: I lean to trying to get the UN to work out something between the Greeks and Cypriots rather than riding the whole thing out and hoping for a good solution. No progress has been made so far.

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Mr. Karamessines: Maybe we should have Tasca go to the Greeks and ask them if they are really sincere in claiming that their only objective is to bring the arms under control. If they say that is their only objective, we could ask if they want us to use our good offices to help settle the issue.

Dr. Kissinger: But they have already stated they have additional objectives.

Mr. Sisco: You're right. They said in their ultimatum that they wanted a new government on Cyprus. I think Tom's [Karamessines] proposal goes too far right now. The Greeks won't come to us.

Dr. Kissinger: I get the impression the Greeks either know very well what they are doing or they are colossally inept.

Mr. Sisco: In the two previous crises, they started out with thunderous moves, and then they collapsed.

Mr. Irwin: That may be true, but it is different now -- because the Turks are there to bolster them.

Mr. Sisco: That is a big difference.

Mr. Noyes: Is it likely there may be a joint Greci-Turk operation?

Mr. Sisco: I think if one side moves, the other side will also move.

Mr. Karamessines: I agree.

Mr. Nutter: We haven't encouraged them.

Mr. Irwin: Turkey and Greece both know we haven't interfered. From the brief cable we sent out the other day [State 025489], Makarios knows we had no information about a Greek move. He may even have thought we were instrumental in stopping the Greeks. We played it just right.

Dr. Kissinger: That depends on what we want. If this is a game of chicken and if we want Makarios to cave in, it should be done quickly. We may have encouraged him to hang on. I am just speaking hypothetically.

Mr. Sisco: It is a game -- and he is a good poker player.

Dr. Kissinger: There are a number of things we could do to make life easier for Popper and his staff, but that may not be our objective. If our objective is to bring about control of the arms, I think we can steer things in that direction.

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Mr. Irwin: My impression of Makarios is that he will not give in. Maybe the Greeks will give in.

Dr. Kissinger: Makarios is a good poker player, as you say. But why should he give in now. If he were going to give in, he would wait till the last moment and not tell us now.

Mr. Irwin: He is also a stubborn man.

Dr. Kissinger: But he never had the Greeks and the Turks against him before. I don't know how he will act.

Mr. Karamessines: February 23 is a key date. That's when new Turkish contingent moves into position on the island. They may bring in heavy guns with them.

Mr. Sisco: Tom is right. The 23rd could be the next crisis point. The Greeks said they would move in heavy guns if the Turks did.

Dr. Kissinger: This could put some pressure on Makarios.

Mr. Irwin: To do what?

Dr. Kissinger: To yield the minimum he would judge necessary in order to prevent that from happening.

Mr. Irwin: Do you mean giving up the arms?

Mr. Sisco: He could do that, and he could also insist that Grivas get off the island. And a short time after this immediate problem blows over, he could announce a change in the cabinet. I think he can save face by making some government change.

Mr. Karamessines: Makarios was reportedly planning to make a change, anyway. But he said the crisis made it impossible to do it now.

Mr. Sisco: Henry, I'd like to get your reactions to a couple of things. If the Greeks come to us and say they want us to go to the UN, there is no problem. Suppose, though, that they tell us they are willing to make some kind of a deal. They ask us to carry a message to the Cypriots, which we do. Then the Cypriots ask us to carry a message back to the Greeks. We would be right in the middle before we know it. What is your instinct to us getting involved in something like that?

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Dr. Kissinger: My instinct is to avoid getting involved and to see if the UN can do it. Suppose the Greeks say they would be glad to see the UN step in. What would we do?

Mr. Sisco: They won't say that.

Dr. Kissinger: The consequence of our message-carrying will be that we are drawn into a substantive position.

Mr. Sisco: That's exactly why I raised the point, Henry. If Makarios comes to us, Popper should tell him that this issue should be settled between the Greeks and Cypriots. But what do we do if both our allies come to us?

Dr. Kissinger: If that happens, we would be forced to carry messages -- and to take sides. And if Makarios reads into this that we are simply acting as an errand boy, it wouldn't make Greece or Turkey happy. I can talk to the President about all of this. But as I just said, my instinct is not to get involved.

Mr. Irwin: The question is whether we should encourage Waldheim to take a more active role.

Mr. Sisco: Waldheim can play a more active role on the arms control issue. But Greece and Turkey came to us because the other element in the note -- the element about a new government -- is something Waldheim can't touch. It is not in his mandate, and I don't think he would touch it with a ten-foot pole.

Mr. Irwin: He can't touch the Grivas issue, either.

Mr. Sisco: That's right.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Greeks come to us and tell us to relax because they are not planning any drastic actions, can we help them come up with a face-saving solution?

Mr. Sisco: Yes, I think so, if they are prepared to cooperate on the arms issue and on getting Grivas off the island. They may even insist on our helping them.

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Dr. Kissinger: Can they do that? My instinct is to stay out of the whole thing as long as we possibly can. Otherwise, we will get nothing but grief from Greece and Turkey (who may accuse us of a stab in the back) and Cyprus and the Soviet Union. However, if outside forces intervene and if the problem goes to the Security Council, we will have to part company with Greece and Turkey.

Mr. Irwin: If, as the situation develops, we feel we can avoid the use of force by bringing it to the UN, we should support such a move.

Dr. Kissinger: Joe says, though, that the Greeks don't want the UN.

Mr. Sisco: That's right. They may throw in a hooker, too. They may tell us that unless we do something, they and the Turks might have to use force. It's a possibility, you know.

Mr. Irwin: The UN has already talked about resuming the intercommunal talks and about the arms issue.

Dr. Kissinger: What have we told Waldheim?

Mr. Sisco: We told him that we know the Greeks and Turks have come to him. We said we would welcome anything he could do on the arms problem. We haven't gone beyond that, and we haven't said anything about the other part of the note.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Irwin) On the one hand, the UN may be able to prevent the situation from deteriorating. On the other hand, the whole problem could become worse if the negotiations fail, and the use of force may be hastened.

Mr. Sisco: Even if the Security Council is in session, the Chinese may temper their public position because you are there, but I think the Soviet Union and China will have parallel positions.

Dr. Kissinger: That's true. One thing the Chinese are allergic too is a piece of territory being split off from a country.

Mr. Sisco: And from the Soviet point of view, intervention would be viewed as NATO aggression against a neutral country.

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Dr. Kissinger: What would be the issue in the Security Council if there is no military intervention on the part of Greece or Turkey?

Mr. Sisco: For one thing, there would be a condemnation of Greece for the note. There would also be a reaffirmation of the territorial integrity and political independence of Cyprus. There would not be any mention of the Czech arms. In effect, it would be an effort to mobilize the Security Council in support of the status quo.

Dr. Kissinger: Why hasn't this been done yet?

Mr. Sisco: Because Makarios is afraid of Greece and Turkey working together. Also, he thinks that the Security Council action may push the button on military intervention. If it goes to the Security Council, the Greeks may feel they have nothing to lose, and they may make their move.

Dr. Kissinger: You are saying that the situation may become worse if it goes to the UN.

Mr. Sisco: Yes. Don't forget, either, that the Turks have the same feeling about the UN as the Israelis do.

Dr. Kissinger: If all this happens, what would we do?

Mr. Sisco: Send a cable to Peking. In the first instance, we should tell them that they should try to work it out themselves. Second, we can try to move it to the UN. If that doesn't work, we would have to see what kind of role we could play ourselves -- although I hope it wouldn't come to that point.

Dr. Kissinger: Who would we send out there?

Mr. Sisco: We haven't gone that far yet.

Dr. Kissinger: If we send you, everyone would think you had an undercover role in regard to the Egyptian-Israeli talks.

Mr. Sisco: If I got within 200 miles of Cairo, Sadat would send someone to talk to me. We could go to the Greeks and ask them if they don't really want the UN to handle the situation. Then Waldheim could quietly get involved. This would be much better than having Cyprus bring it up at the Security Council.

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Gen. Vogt: I, for one, am worried about Makarios distributing the arms.

Mr. Sisco: We are, too, and we're watching the situation.

Dr. Kissinger: If he does distribute the arms, could Greece and Turkey intervene?

Mr. Sisco: If he did that, the fat would be in the fire. Greece would probably unleash the National Guard, which is basically loyal to Athens.

Dr. Kissinger: What about the point Tom [Karamessines] made earlier? Would it be possible for Tasca to ask the Greeks if control of the Czech arms is their principle objective?

Mr. Sisco: I don't think we should be that specific. We could send a message to Tasca, asking him if he detects any changes in Greek objectives. We can tell him to talk to Palamas and try to feel out the current situation. We shouldn't go beyond that point, though.

Dr. Kissinger: That sounds okay to me. Will you send a cable over here for clearance?

Mr. Sisco: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: What about Popper? Can we calm him down?

Mr. Sisco: Yes. We can send him a cable telling him not to see Makarios. We can authorize him to see Clerides, to get a current reading of the situation. We should tell him not to take any initiatives to see anyone else. If he receives any initiatives, though, he should ask us for instructions.

Dr. Kissinger: I have the impression he will make sure that Clerides takes the initiative.

Mr. Sisco: No. That wouldn't happen. Popper is an activist, and he is very intelligent. He also follows orders.

Dr. Kissinger: I'm not saying he would disobey orders. He would just see that the initiative came from Clerides.

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Mr. Sisco: Popper is playing it straight.

Dr. Kissinger: What about his staff? Can it be restrained?

Mr. Sisco: Sure.

Dr. Kissinger: The Embassy personnel always want to be well-liked by the people they are accredited to -- and this is only normal.

Mr. Sisco: Henry, this has always been an effective and efficient Embassy. When something has occurred, they have always found out about it and let us know. Popper's worry is that the Embassy's pattern of reaction in this crisis has evolved differently from the way it has in other crises. He is worried that Makarios will read something into that. I think we can tell him to see Clerides and to use the meeting as a listening exercise to find out where the talks stand. Popper can live with instructions like that.

Dr. Kissinger: It makes sense to me.

Mr. Sisco: I can put it all in one cable for you.

Dr. Kissinger: What about Turkey?

Mr. Sisco: Handley is alright. Turkey is off to one side, anyway. Also, their Ambassador came in to see me yesterday.

Dr. Kissinger: I will go along with you. If you think Turkey is not the principle mover, you don't have to include Handley in the cable.

Mr. Sisco: It doesn't really matter. Handley will give me some indicators next week, if we need any.

Dr. Kissinger: Next week will be a happy week -- with this crisis, and Vietnam, among others. At any rate, the food should be good.

Mr. Sisco: We have a delicate situation here. We will do the best we can.

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Dr. Kissinger: I realize that. While I have you all together, let me say that we hope to get some action on the Bangladesh humanitarian assistance package. Could we delay making the announcement until after the China trip? Can the program start right away, though?

Mr. Sisco: I will check with Maury [Williams].

Mr. Irwin: My inclination is to go ahead with the program before we make the announcement. But that would depend, in part, on the discussions you have with the Chinese.

Mr. Sisco: How much will we contribute? Has the President decided?

Dr. Kissinger: His inclination is that we give 33 1/3 percent of the total contribution, with the understanding that 175,000 tons of food grain could start moving without an announcement.

Mr. Sisco: I see no problem with that.

Dr. Kissinger: I will try to get a decision from the President.

Mr. Irwin: What about recognition of Bangladesh?

Dr. Kissinger: The paper is with the President.

Mr. Sisco: I've got one other thing, Henry. What about the Hussein problem?

Dr. Kissinger: I made a recommendation, but I don't have an answer yet. I recommended an informal stag dinner.

Mr. Sisco: Great. I take it, too, that the Iran visit is in good shape again.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

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- I. The situation has shown little movement over the past two days. Makarios continues to stonewall, delaying giving the Greeks an official answer to their note, in the meantime stimulating open expressions of Greek Cypriot support and quietly augmenting his personal security forces.
- II. The next move would appear to be up to the Greeks. They have been uncommunicative with US and UK officials about their intentions.
 - A. Yesterday Athens released the text of the note it delivered to Makarios, describing it as an appeal rather than an ultimatum.
 - B. Greek Foreign Minister Palamas professes that Athens' main concern is that the Czech arms be turned over to the UN forces, but the arms issue was probably a pretext for a Greek move to oust Makarios.

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- C. In any event ~~there are other signs that~~
the Greeks, having failed to rally substantial Greek Cypriot opinion behind them, may be considering more forceful action.
- D. Greek Ambassador Panayotakos reportedly has met with several bishops on the island, presumably to seek their support in opposing the Archbishop.

III. Makarios believes that time and international opinion are on his side, but he is said to be aware that the fight is not over.

- A. Makarios reportedly will delay his reply to the Greeks for several days, while Glafcos Clerides, a close adviser to the Archbishop continues efforts to mediate between Athens and Nicosia.
- B. Makarios supporters, from villages and schools demonstrated yesterday and today in support of the Archbishop.
- C. Greek Cypriot communists publicly sided with Makarios today. A Communist party

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leader condemned Athens demands, but took pains not to antagonize Greece unnecessarily. Makarios had previously warned Communists and left-wingers to lie low, but we have no reason to believe he would be upset by their unsolicited support.

D. It appears that right-wingers, but not Grivas elements, have also aided with the Archbishop. Glafcos Clerides, the head of a right-wing party and a close adviser to Makarios, has been successful in rallying such support for the Archbishop.

E. Makarios told his advisers that he expects Athens to make an assassination attempt on him next.

F. The Makarios forces are prepared for pro-Grivas demonstrations, but so far none have materialized.

IV. Ankara so far seems content to stand aside, awaiting the results of Greek pressure on Makarios.

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- A. Ankara is making public its position that the Czech arms must be turned over to the UN forces.
- B. Turkey's clandestine radio on Cyprus predicted that ^{the}an end of Makarios seemed to be in sight, and said that it is very probable "that Greece and Turkey, as guarantor powers, may soon join forces in the matter." This is the first mention of any possibility of Greek-Turkish action over the Cyprus events.
- C. Unconfirmed press reports indicate that Turkey has placed its forces in southern Turkey on alert. This would include the 39th Division which has long been slated for military reaction to events on Cyprus.
- V. In Greece, there still are no indications of troop alerts or other military preparations for possible intervention.
- VI. On Cyprus itself, there has been no significant change in the status of military forces,

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although each side appears to be improving its readiness posture.

- A. The Greek Cypriot police, the Greek-controlled Cypriot National Guard, and the Turkish Cypriots remain on alert.
- B. The Greek Army contingent reportedly is reinforcing the Cypriot National Guard. Guard units have quietly deployed to positions from where they could move against Makarios quickly.
- C. The Archbishop's personal guard and the Cyprus police force at his residence in the old city have been augmented.

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